Lord Chaplin had called on me and expressed his support for the policy of the minimum price. He was pessimistic as to the prospect of increasing production in 1917, as the land required cleaning, and the farmer would not break up his grass-land until he got his guarantee. The interesting comment on the scheme made by Captain Bathurst, who stated that he represented in the House of Commons a constituency containing some of the worst-paid agricultural labourers in the country, was that among farmers there was an increasing appreciation of the probability that if the labourer were better paid he would give better work. The more enlightened were in favour of a Wage Board, because it would place all the farmers on an equal footing.

At this meeting we also discussed pheasants, and decided that the Board of Agriculture should take any measures necessary to prevent them from making inroads on our grain crops. The pheasants destruction of the crops by game in the vicinity of preserves has been treated as a joke by men who can afford to indulge in such humour. During the War, when food was scarce, it was a bad practical joke. The War had almost stopped the usual autumnal massacres of the pheasantry, and the result was that the ravages of

the surplus birds were devastating. The Board was authorised to issue an Order empowering tenants to kill pheasants where the landowners had failed to keep them down. The War, which upset so many ancient landmarks, was here making inroads upon those sacred feudal relics, the English Game Laws. It is significant of the temper of the times that this rough interference with privileges which had been